



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Early Childhood Council

20210310-3d: Prioritization of Redevelopment Proposals that Include High Quality Child Care

WHEREAS, prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Austin/Travis County had a critical shortage of high quality affordable child care programs (as defined by a Texas Rising Star 4-Star rating); and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated this child care crisis with a loss of 14.8% of the total capacity for serving low-income children age birth to 5 in quality-rated child care centers between March and September 2020; and

WHEREAS, two upcoming re-development sites at St. John's and Crestview are located in Texas Rising Star Subsidized Child Care Deserts (as defined by Children At Risk*)” due to the low number of spots for Workforce Commission-subsidized childcare and TRS-4 childcare centers; and

WHEREAS, rent or ownership of appropriate physical space for high quality child care is a prohibitive cost for opening high quality child care programs as real estate prices in Austin have skyrocketed. Child care subsidy reimbursements for quality-rated centers averages only 75% of market-rate and this limits revenue to cover costs. The amount paid in rent reduces resources for actual provision of care including compensating the workforce with a living wage; and

WHEREAS, co-location of affordable high quality child care and affordable housing within walking distance and/or public transportation access facilitates participation of adults in continuing education, workforce development programs and the workforce; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Strategic Outcomes Economic Affordability strategies includes “Creat(ing) equitable access to quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) by supporting families who do not qualify for existing free programs and cannot afford quality programs on their own, increasing availability of quality ECE programs, and encouraging living wages for ECE providers.” with a metric measuring “Number and percentage of children enrolled in quality Early Childhood Education programs (as evidenced by meeting Texas Rising Star criteria)” as one of Council’s top 10 indicators;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Early Childhood Council recommends that the City of Austin prioritize selection of redevelopment proposals for sites adding affordable housing units which include site plans for affordable high quality child care (defined by those

that contract to accept child care subsidies and commit to meeting Texas Rising Star 4 quality rating).

*Children At Risk: <https://childrenatrisk.org/childcaresertmap/>

Date of Approval: March 10, 2021

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 7-0 vote

Attest:


